



Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Ontario Region
600-55 York Street
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Région de l'Ontario
600-55 rue York
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

July 20, 2020

Sent by email

Chief Richard Allen
Constance Lake First Nation
P.O. Box 4000
Constance Lake ON P0L 1B0
Chief@clfn.on.ca

Dear Chief Richard Allen:

Subject: Request to Suspend Consultation and Engagement Activities on the Marten Falls Community Access Road Project and Webequie Supply Road Project Impact Assessments

Thank you for your letter dated June 12, 2020, regarding Constance Lake First Nation's current resource constraints and COVID-19 challenges. The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada notes that these constraints and challenges impact your community's ability to participate in consultation and engagement activities during the impact assessment processes for the Marten Falls Community Access Road and the Webequie Supply Road Projects.

The Agency also acknowledges that Constance Lake First Nation has formally announced a State of Emergency and that your community's pandemic response is a priority that requires the full attention of staff and community membership. The Agency is committed to substantive, meaningful, and respectful consultation conduct throughout the impact assessment processes for the Projects. Please note that the Agency does not have any current consultation activities planned for the Projects. The Agency intends to provide an update in the coming months regarding future anticipated consultation activities.

Respecting the COVID-19 considerations at this time, the Agency has halted in-person and in-community meetings. However, when a meeting is unavoidable during the current circumstance, we will conduct those activities through digital communications including: teleconference calls and WebEx as appropriate and to the preference of Indigenous groups. The Agency remains flexible and able to adapt our conduct as necessary to prioritize the health and safety of communities participating in assessments.

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Proponent Engagement Activities

According to Section 6 of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines, the Agency expects Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation to give consideration to culturally appropriate, gender sensitive, and trauma-informed and healing centered engagement methods and approaches. Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation are expected to plan their engagement activities in consideration of the current circumstances, including the Government of Canada's advice to all Canadians to implement social distancing measures and avoid close contact with others to minimize COVID-19 transmission in communities.

Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation are expected to develop an Impact Statement containing the information and studies outlined in the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and submit it to the Agency within three years of the Notice of Commencement. Upon request from Marten Falls First Nation or Webequie First Nation, the Agency may extend the timeline. In the coming months, the Agency will continue to work with Marten Falls First Nation, Webequie First Nation, federal authorities, the Province of Ontario, Indigenous groups and the public to support the development of the Impact Statement for the Projects.

Ontario's Northern Road Link Announcement

As noted in the Agency's June 23, 2020, email to Constance Lake First Nation, the Agency has not received an Initial Project Description for the Northern Road Link. Upon the proponents' submission of an Initial Project Description that complies with the *Information and Management of Time Limits Regulations*, the Agency will notify Indigenous groups who may be impacted by the project of a formal comment period and seek their views on the Initial Project Description and whether an impact assessment should be required for the Northern Road Link. Please note that, in Section 22 of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines for the Projects, the Agency has identified reasonably foreseeable developments in the Ring of Fire area, including the construction and operation of the Northern Road Link, to be considered at a minimum in the Projects' cumulative effects assessment: <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/documents/p80184/133937E.pdf>.

The Agency looks forward to receiving future status updates from Constance Lake First Nation and when convenient to your comment, the Agency is open to hosting a virtual meeting to support your community to re-familiarize with these assessment processes. For further questions regarding the Marten Falls Community Access Road Project and the Webequie Supply Road Project impact assessments, please continue to direct your correspondence to Caitlin Cafaro, Crown Consultation Coordinator at IAAC.MartenFalls.AEIC@canada.ca or IAAC.Webequie.AEIC@canada.ca.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Anjala Puvananathan
Director, Ontario Region

c.c.: Bertha Sutherland, Lands & Resource Officer, Constance Lake First Nation
Gilles Boucher, Chief Financial Officer, Constance Lake First Nation
Monica John-George, Executive Director, Constance Lake First Nation
Kimberly Jorgenson, Environmental Services Coordinator, Four Rivers
Environmental Services Group